

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The claims are 20 to 27.

The above amendment is responsive to points set forth in the Official Action.

In this regard, a new set of claims is presented in which new main claim 20 is based on a combination of previous claims 10 and 11.

New claim 21 replaces previous claim 12.

New claim 22 replaces previous claim 13.

New claim 23 replaces previous claim 15.

New claims 24 to 26 replace previous claims 17 to 19, respectively.

The significance of the above amendment will become further apparent from the remarks below.

Turning to Official Action paragraph 1, the required correction has been made in the new claims.

With regard to Official Action paragraph 4, claims 9 to 19 have been rejected as failing to comply with the written description requirement since the claims have omitted the previously existing claim element of a polymer film and it is said to be unclear how there is support for omitting this claim element described in the specification as integral to the invention.

In reply, support for the terminology “bonded to a polymeric chain” may be found at page 4, lines 11 to 15, and page 5, lines 9 to 17, where it is described that the Lewis acid group in the Lewis acid catalyst of the present invention is “bonded to a polymeric chain.”

In other words, in the present catalyst, the Lewis acid is bonded to a “polymeric chain,” which may be in the form of a membrane. The polymeric chain may also be in bulk or, a fiber, a film, beads, etc.

With regard to Official Action paragraph 7I, no claim corresponding to claim 9 is presently recited.

With regard to Official Action paragraph 7II, it is said to be unclear whether the recited preamble of “a polymer supported Lewis as a catalyst” should be interpreted as

requiring a polymer film support as present in the originally filed claims. In reply, the above remarks make it clear that a polymer film support is not a necessary element to the present claims.

Turning to the rejection on prior art, claims 1, 2, 14, 16 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Babcock et al., U.S. 6,281,309. Further, claims 1, 2, 14, 16 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Babcock et al.

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

While these rejections include previously cancelled claims 1 and 2, it is considered that the Examiner intended to reject claims 9 and 10 so that the claims under rejection would be 9, 10, 14, 16 and 19, as confirmed by the Examiner by telephone on December 8, 2004.

It is also noted that claim 11 has not been rejected on prior art and therefore, the subject matter of claim 11 has been incorporated in claim 10. The combined claims appear as new main claim 20 which is similarly free from prior art rejection.

The remainder of the claims ultimately depend on claim 20 and are similarly free from prior art rejection.

No further issues remaining, allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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